

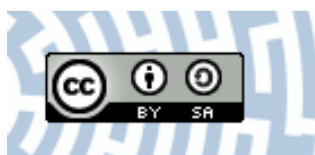


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Chapter 7

To save or to spend? Students' attitude towards money

MONIKA STRBOVA, VIERA ZOZULAKOVA, URSZULA SWADŹBA

The aim of this article is to analyze the attitude of the young generation from the Visegrad Group countries towards money. Money is one of the elements economic awareness is comprised of. The possession and spending of money usually entails very particular behaviors and emotions, which in itself is a valid reason to research this area of economic awareness. In this part of the volume we will work to verify the hypothesis presented in the part "Theoretical and methodological basis of the research":

1. We assume that young people have an ambivalent attitude to money. On the one hand, they think there are more important things than wealth, and on the other hand, they attach considerable importance to money; they need it to have a pleasant leisure time. They acknowledge, however, that there is a purpose in saving.

During the analysis, the concept of social attitudes will be applied as the most adequate for this type of research. Firstly, we will present the value of money within the value system and then the specific problems connected with particular attitudes towards work, meaning of money in life, spending and saving money. The similarities and differences between national groups will be presented. The students' answers will be then juxtaposed and correlated with the students assessments of their household conditions. Such correlation is very purposeful as the very fact of being able to undertake/continue studies often depends on the household's financial situation, whether or not the family makes livelihood to a degree sufficient to support financially a studying family member. The situation of the household also affects the student's family as well as the student's own consumer opportunities and choices. Accordingly, bearing all the metric data in mind, considering this independent variable seemed most necessary. In the summary of this chapter, an attempt will be made to sketch student types based on their attitudes towards money.

7.1 Attitude towards money and preferred attitudes – theoretical analysis

The concept of money and its functions have been frequently discussed in economics (MILEWSKI, 1993; DACH, 1998; MISHKIN, 2002). Money in a money-goods economy has specific functions, such as: measure of value, means of circulation, means of thesurization and means of payment (DACH, 1998: 22). Apart from economists, sociologists and psychologists are also interested in money. This is due to the fact that it also has numerous social functions. Georg Simmel, a classic sociological thinker, already drew attention to those qualities of money (SIMMEL, 1997: 210). Above all, what Simmel saw in money was a value measure. Money, being a social creation, a result of human activity, is repetitive and becomes a tool in social life (SIMMEL, 1997: 212; BORCUC, 2010: 98). Simmel also pointed out money impersonation – it shapes and limits people to a much lesser extent than having other things like ground or professional skills. Money impersonation enables removing personal involvement from interpersonal relations. On the basis of Simmel's views, certain areas of sociological thinking about money have been developed, including the studies on the essence of work, its functions and features, social conditions of existence and development of money, social consequences of money functioning, perception of money, attitudes towards money, use of money in different social situations and patterns of its economic management (BORCUC, 1998: 99). Sociological theories about money are complementary with theories of social trust (GÓRNIAK, 2000; KUŹNIARZ, 2006: 72). Money is a special and most fundamental sign of such trust and trust itself finds fullest material expression in money. Each monetary transaction involves broad social environment and requires trust. It includes contractors and socio-institutional mechanisms which ensure efficient functioning of a given payment system. This mechanism has been called "society abbreviation" (KUŹNIARZ, 2006: 73).

Still, the most frequently examined and analyzed topic, in both sociology and psychology, is the perception of money and the attitudes towards it (BORCUC, 1998; GÓRNIAK, 2010; PARTYCKI, 2004; TYSZKA, 2004; KUŹNIAR, 2006; GOSZCZYŃSKA, GÓRNIK-DUROSE, 2010; WĄSOWICZ-KIRYŁO, 2013; GAŚSIOROWSKA, 2014). Accordingly, these theoretical issues will be the subject of the analysis below.

The concept of attitude emerged in sociology in the work of Znaniecki (ZNANIECKI, THOMAS, 1976) to be later frequently discussed in American sociological discourse (ROKEACH, 1968). In Polish sociology the topic was taken up by Stanisław Ossowski, Stefan Nowak and Zbigniew Boksański (OSSOWSKI, 1968: 104; NOWAK, 1973; BOKSAŃSKI, 1990: 129). For the purposes of this study the definition of "attitude" as formulated by Nowak was adopted, which states that attitude is a permanent disposition for making assessments and a behavior

towards a subject (NOWAK, 1973: 23). In practice, embracing such a definition means that we deal with an individual's permanent disposition for a specific action. Attitude includes certain components: cognitive, emotional and evaluating (i.e. affective) as well as behavioral (also called functional) (NOWAK, 1973: 26). In the Polish scientific literature the definition of attitude towards money has been formulated drawing from psychology: "Attitude towards money is the totality of relatively permanent dispositions to money evaluation and emotional responses to it and relatively permanent accompanying beliefs about the nature and properties of money and a relatively permanent disposition to certain types of behavior related to money" (GAŚSIOROWSKA, 2008, qtd. after WĄSOWICZ-KIRYŁO, 2013: 30).

Various academic analyses of the notion and its meanings led to a popular distinction of five dimensions that define people's attitude towards money. The first of these is power and prestige. It reflects the human tendency to use money to impress other people and to treat money as measure of achieved success. The second dimension is refraining from spending money. This sphere covers cautious money spending and reluctance towards hasty spending. Further attitudes are mistrust, which indicates a tendency to perceive situation related to money as suspicious and leading to dishonesty, and quality, which concerns spending money in the most reasonable way possible. The last factor defining the attitude towards money is anxiety, which indicates that money is the source of fear and negative emotions (TANG, GILBERT, 1995; TYSZKA, ZALEŚKIEWICZ, 2004: 182–183).

When researching the topic of the attitude towards money, authors usually try to distinguish certain profiles and types of attitudes as these are useful for further research and enable making comparisons and verifications. In the research conducted in Poland four profiles were distinguished: anxious admirers, those denying the importance of money, reflective managers and uninvolved hedonists (GAŚSIOROWSKA, 2014: 62–70). The anxious admirers are characterized by a very high level of belief in the power stemming from money possession. Of all the four profiles this group feels the strongest aversion to financial liabilities. In turn, the people, who deny money importance are characterized by low or average level of being affected by all the earlier enumerated aspects of attitudes towards money. These are the people who tend to withdraw from situations involving money. The reflective managers are those whose approach to money is instrumental and emotional, focusing on effective management of their resources. The uninvolved hedonists are people who have a balanced judgement about money, treat money in an instrumental way and are oriented to spending money on their pleasure (GAŚSIOROWSKA, 2014: 110–111). Psychological and sociological research show that individual attitudes towards money depend on socio-demographic features in which age plays an essential role. The young generally enjoy spending more than other age groups (WĄSOWICZ-KIRYŁO, 2013: 201–211).

The younger respondents with longer anticipated life expectancy are, however, those who see the point in saving, unlike many older people. Similarly in the case of mortgages and loans – the younger respondents are the ones who most frequently see their profitability.

Our analysis will further strive to verify the data and information gathered. Still, the situation of young people is different from that of older people in a very obvious way – because of the different conditions of economic socialization, which for the young happened already in the realities of the market economy (KOWALCZUK, 2014b). This certainly also influences individual attitudes towards money. For this reason we have devised certain new types of attitudes.

7.2 Money in the value system

Empirical analysis of the issue of attitude towards money should start from discussing the position of money in the examined students' value system. As discussed earlier in the volume, they were asked about their value system as money was placed among other values, such as: family, work, education, religion, health, free time, friends and acquaintances, and the students had to assess their importance. At this point only the value of money, being the most relevant one for this paper will be subject to further analysis.

Table 7.1. Important issues in life – Money (%)

| Type of answer | Very important | Important | Of little importance | Not important | Hard to say |
|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|----------------------|---------------|-------------|
| Poles (N = 400) | 19.0 | 52.5 | 23.3 | 3.8 | 1.4 |
| Czechs (N = 400) | 23.5 | 48.3 | 24.5 | 3.2 | 0.8 |
| Slovaks (N = 387) | 18.6 | 40.1 | 30.2 | 8.8 | 2.3 |
| Hungarians (N = 369) | 24.3 | 51.4 | 21.0 | 3.0 | 0.3 |

SOURCE: Team research, own calculation.

The results of the research show that money is the biggest value for the Hungarian and Czech students as these were about 24% of the “very important” answers. On the second position in terms of money valuation it was ranked almost equally by the Polish and Slovak students (Poles – 19.0%, Slovaks – 18.6% of “very important” answers). If we take into consideration the “important” answers, we can see that it was most frequently chosen by the Polish students (52.5%) and then the Hungarian students (51.4%). There is a small percent-

age difference between the Czech and Hungarian students' answers (Czechs – 48.3%). In contrast, only 40.1% of the Slovak students treat money as an important value. Interestingly, the opposite answer – money as being “of little importance” was chosen most often by the Slovak students (8.8%), then Polish (3.8%), Czech (3.2%) and at the end Hungarian students (3.0%). Summing up this part of research results, we can come to the following conclusions. Money is the greatest value for the Hungarian students, as this group constituted almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the “very important” and “important” answers. Next in order are the Czech (almost 70%) and the Polish students (also 70%). The Polish students, however, put less emphasis on perceiving money as “very important” comparing to the Czechs students. The Slovak students clearly stand out from the other groups. Less than 60% of them think that money is a “very important” or “important” value. Also a relatively high percentage of them think that money is not an important value. This perhaps stems from the fact that the Slovak students were slightly younger than their peers from the other national groups or/and because of the fact that a lot of them come from small towns. Psychological research of attitudes towards money shows that residents of metropolitan environments have a more positive attitude towards money than those who live in small environments. In metropolitan environments it is easier to use money to meet a broad spectrum of needs. In small environments, religion, family and home are more important (WĄSOWICZ-KIRYŁO, 2013: 201–199).

A further analysis has been conducted by correlating the answers to the question about the place of money in the system of values and the students' assessments of the household conditions they live in. Four most commonly declared answers will be taken into account (assessment of household material conditions – question from an imprint number 10/1 – 10/4):

- We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.);
- We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses;
- We do ok, we need to save;
- We live frugally, but we have enough to eat.

Correlating the answers to these two questions gave surprising results. The correlation results are as follows: the Poles – $p = 0.000$, chi-square relevant, Cramer's $V = 0.189$; the Czechs – $p = 0.005$, chi-square relevant, Cramer's $V = 0.158$; the Slovaks – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.931$; the Hungarians – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.578$. The juxtaposition indicates a strong dependence of money valuation on household situation in the case of the Polish students and slightly less in the case of the Czech students. This means that the better the students assess their household material conditions, the more value they place on money. No such correlation was found in the Slovak and Hungarian declarations. Still, when we analyze the percentage results of the “very important” answers, we can see other dependencies.

Table 7.2. Important issues in life – Money (answer “very important”) and the assessment of household material conditions (%)

| Assessment of household material conditions | Poles | Czechs | Slovaks | Hungarians |
|---|--------|--------|---------|------------|
| | N = 76 | N = 94 | N = 72 | N = 89 |
| We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.) | 34.6 | 25.0 | 22.2 | 33.9 |
| We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses | 17.7 | 25.2 | 17.4 | 22.5 |
| We do ok, we need to save | 10.4 | 20.3 | 20.0 | 23.9 |
| We live frugally, but we have enough to eat | 7.9 | 9.1 | 16.7 | 17.1 |

SOURCE: Team research, own calculation.

The answers show that people who live in better material conditions attach greater importance to money. Such dependence occurred in all the countries. The highest percentage of such students is in Poland and Hungary (about 1/3) and slightly lower in the Czech Republic and Slovakia (1/4). With the choices of the other options, percentages are either lower or remaining on the same level. The respondents who declared that: “We live frugally, but we have enough to eat”, were the smallest percentage of those considering money a very important value in life. How can we explain such students’ choices? What may be at work here is the fact that the students whose parents have money (and they themselves by consequence), can and do experience opportunities to buy goods and services as well as lead a more comfortable life. The students who live in worse material conditions, think that money is not important as money stands for the goods that have been unattainable to them anyway so far, thus they attach less importance to it. The verity of a psychological principle of ascribing a higher meaning to what one already has and to what is possible to achieve while lowering the importance of what is hard to achieve, seems to be supported by our results and can thus be considered a valid explanation of this phenomenon. The analysis of further answers will allow further verifications.

7.3 The importance of money in life

The further analysis will focus on the answers to two following questions: “With which of the following statements concerning the relation to money do you agree?” and “What is your view on the importance of money in your life?”. In the case of the first question, the respondents had the task of responding to three specific statements expressing attitudes towards money (specified in Table 7.3), while in the second question – to four statements (specified in Table 7.4). There were four possible answers, ranging from “definitely yes” to “definitely not” and “hard to say”. The answers to the first question are presented in the table below.

Table 7.3. With which of the following statements concerning the relation to money do you agree? (%)

| National | Definitely yes | Rather Yes | Rather not | Definitely not | Hard to say |
|---|----------------|------------|------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Money does not bring happiness | | | | | |
| Poles (N = 400) | 13.5 | 35.0 | 25.8 | 21.3 | 4.4 |
| Czechs (N = 349) | 12.5 | 52.3 | 23.5 | 7.2 | 4.5 |
| Slovaks (N = 387) | 14.0 | 29.2 | 37.0 | 16.4 | 3.3 |
| Hungarians (N = 368) | 16.9 | 32.8 | 33.1 | 15.4 | 1.8 |
| 2. There are many things in life much more important than money | | | | | |
| Poles | 56.0 | 36.0 | 4.7 | 1.3 | 2.0 |
| Czechs | 54.5 | 36.3 | 7.5 | 0.5 | 1.2 |
| Slovaks | 64.1 | 28.2 | 5.9 | 1.0 | 0.8 |
| Hungarians | 56.6 | 33.6 | 5.5 | 2.7 | 1.6 |
| 3. I cannot enjoy my free time, as I have no money | | | | | |
| Poles | 0.8 | 7.5 | 32.2 | 55.0 | 4.5 |
| Czechs | 7.5 | 32.3 | 45.5 | 11.5 | 3.2 |
| Slovaks | 2.7 | 15.5 | 38.0 | 41.1 | 2.7 |
| Hungarians | 44.3 | 41.8 | 9.3 | 2.7 | 1.9 |

SOURCE: Team research, own calculation.

Almost half of the Poles, Slovaks and Hungarians definitely agree or rather agree with the first statement, namely “Money does not bring happiness”. However, there are differences between them when we analyze the detailed answers. The “definitely yes” answers were most frequently chosen by the Hungarians (16.9%) and the least by the Czechs (12.5%). The difference in those choices is around 5%. Meanwhile the “rather yes” answer was most often chosen by the Czechs (52.3%) and least by the Slovaks (29.2%), the difference is 23.1%. We can conclude that the Hungarians most strongly agree with this statement and the Slovaks the least. The Czechs do not express such a strong view, they rather either agree or disagree. The Poles are close in their views to the Hungarians, but support this statement with less emphasis. Such an interpretation of the results is confirmed by the analysis of the answers of those who did not accept the statement. The Polish students most strongly disagree with this statement (21.3% “definitely not” answers) and the Czech students disagree the least (7.2%). The Slovak and Hungarian students show a slightly ambivalent attitude towards this statement.

In conclusion, the results of the analysis of the answers to the question are not clear. Similar results had been obtained in CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) research (FAŁECKA, 2013: 11). Still, we can formulate some generalizations. The Poles are a national group that most often disagrees with this statement (money not bringing happiness). This means that 1/5 of them think that money is needed for happiness. The next national group stressing more strongly that money is needed for happiness are the Slovaks and then the Hungarians. The Czechs mostly show either negative or ambivalent attitudes; this can be explained by the fact that poorer societies attach more importance to money than the richer ones (such as the Czechs).

The next statement reads "There are many things in life much more important than money". A vast majority of the students definitely agree with this statement. It is a similar result to the one already obtained in CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) research (FAŁECKA, 2013: 11). The differences in the answers of the Poles, Czechs and Hungarians are not large. The Slovaks most strongly agree with such a statement (64.1% of the "definitely yes" answers), then the Hungarians (56.6%) and Poles (56.0%). This statement is slightly less strongly accepted by the Czechs (54.5%). The definite lack of acceptance ranges from 2.7% (Hungarians) to 0.5% (Czechs).

In contrast, the next statement: "I cannot enjoy my free time, as I have no money" brought a significant surprise. In the CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) research, money is not needed by the majority of young Poles to enjoy free time, although the need grows with age (FAŁECKA, 2013: 12). The youngest age group, up to 24 years of age, in the vast majority disagreed with this statement. Our research gave similar results for the Polish students (55.0% of the "definitely not" answers and 32.2% of the "rather not" answers) and the Slovaks students (41.1% of the "definitely not" and 38.0% of the "rather not" answers). The Czech students less strongly disagree with this statement (11.5% of the "definitely not" answers), while almost half of them rather disagree (45.5%). The biggest surprise are the views of the Hungarian students, because in the vast majority they confirmed that they cannot enjoy their free time due to lack of money (44.3% of the "definitely yes" and 41.8% of the "rather yes" answers). To sum this point up it can be stated that Czech students, living in a richer country and Hungarian students, coming from big cities, do not acknowledge the possibility of enjoying one's free time without financial resources. The need for money and its leisurely spending increases along with the prosperity of a given society.

Can a correlation be found between the students' assessments of household material conditions and their responses to the statement: "Money does not bring happiness"? Not in the case of the Czech, Slovak and Polish students whose answers choices are not statistically relevant: Poles – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.096$; Czechs – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.373$; Slovaks – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.906$. On the other hand, when it comes to the Hungarian students the correlation was

found and the choices show statistic relevance: the Hungarians – chi-square relevant: $p = 0.005$, Cramer's $V = 0.176$. When analyzing the percentages data of the Hungarian students' answers as well as their Polish peers a certain tendency can be distinguished.

- We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.): Answer “definitely not”: Poles – 32.7%, Hungarians – 22.0%.
- We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses. Answer “definitely not”: Poles – 22.4%, Hungarians – 20.3%.
- We do OK, we need to save. Answer “definitely not”: Poles – 18.5%, Hungarians – 14.8%.
- We live frugally, but we have enough to eat. Answer “definitely not”: Poles – 9.1%, Hungarians – 11.7%.

The students who considered their household material conditions very good, more often disagree with the statement: “Money does not bring happiness”. As the assessment of the household material conditions lowers, the percentage of the people disagreeing with the statement follows proportionately. It thus seems clear that those who live in better household conditions and have money more often think money is prerequisite for a happy life. This can be explained by the fact that because they do have money the situation for them is real rather than hypothetical and they tangibly experience its positive impact on their quality of life. Those who live in worse household material conditions less frequently represent such a view, as they have never actually experienced affluence as something increasing the quality of life and satisfaction from it.

As regards the second statement “There are many things in life much more important than money”, the responses given by the Poles, Czechs and Slovaks are not statistically relevant in correlation with their declarations concerning household material conditions: Poles – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.453$; Czechs – chi-square relevant: $p = 0.026$, Cramer's $V = 0.142$; Slovaks – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.086$. The percentage results show that as material conditions are declining, the percentage of those who definitely agree with this statement increases. The Polish students' answers can serve as an example:

- We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.): Answer “Definitely yes” – 48.1%.
- We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses. Answer “Definitely yes „ – 54.4%.
- We do OK, we need to save. Answer “Definitely yes” – 64.2%.
- We live frugally, but we have enough to eat. Answer “Definitely yes” – 72.7%.

Accordingly, we can conclude that in the situation of adverse material conditions and lack of money, other values are appreciated and prioritized while the importance of money is marginalized.

Regarding the third statement “I cannot enjoy my free time, as I have no money” – the analysis proved no statistical dependency between the responses to this statement and the students declarations on the household material conditions assessment: Poles – chi-square does not show any relevance: $p = 0.879$; Czechs – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.733$; Slovaks – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.967$, Hungarians – chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.362$. The Hungarian students’ answers (majority of them accepted this statement) show that as the household material conditions get better, the percentage of the people definitely accepting this statement increases:

- We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.). Answer “definitely yes” – 54.2%.
- We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses. Answer “definitely yes „ – 47.9%.
- We do OK, we need to save. Answer “definitely yes” – 36.0%.
- We live frugally, but we have enough to eat. Answer “definitely yes” – 33.3%.

Based on the Hungarian students’ answers we can conclude that students who have sufficient resources are unable to spend their free time without using them. They feel that money allows them to spend their free time more purposefully.

The second question concerns more specific situations and choices students face every day. These are indicative of behaviors and attitude towards money. The point here was not only to diagnose the students’ awareness but also specific consumer behavior. The students were asked the following question: “What is your view on the importance of money in your life?” Four statements were given (featured in the table below). As in case of the previous question, the students were supposed to respond and chose a possibility from “definitely yes” to “definitely not”. The results are presented below.

By analyzing the first of the above statements: “I feel worse when I do not have what my friends have” we can say that the vast majority of the students do not agree with this (“definitely not” and “rather not” answers altogether: the Polish students – 82.6%, the Czech students – 73.3% and the Slovak students – 73.4%). On the other hand, only half of the Hungarian students gave such answers (52.6%). When it comes to the “definitely not” answer it was most often chosen by the Polish students (35.3%) and the least by the Hungarian students (17.8%), who were also the national group in which the students most frequently agreed with this statement (“definitely yes” and “rather yes” answers – 43.7%). Among the Polish students only 15.3% chose this answer, a result similar to the one obtained by CBOS (Public Opinion Research Center) research (FALECKA, 2013: 9). The Hungarian students more often feel the pressure to have money as then they do not feel inferior to others. This one of the signs of a materialistic approach to life mostly characterizes the inhabitants of big cities (WĄSOWICZ-KIRYŁO, 2013: 199–200).

Table 7.4. What is your view on the importance of money in your life? (%)

| National | Definitely yes | Rather yes | Rather not | Definitely not | Hard to say |
|--|----------------|------------|------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. I feel worse when I do not have what my friends have | | | | | |
| Poles (N = 400) | 2.5 | 12.8 | 47.3 | 35.3 | 2.1 |
| Czechs (N = 349) | 1.8 | 20.3 | 54.8 | 18.5 | 4.6 |
| Slovaks (N = 387) | 5.7 | 19.6 | 48.1 | 25.3 | 1.3 |
| Hungarians (N = 368) | 12.3 | 31.4 | 34.8 | 17.8 | 3.7 |
| 2. You have to spend a lot of money to have respect and impress people | | | | | |
| Poles | 1.3 | 3.0 | 27.8 | 67.3 | 0.6 |
| Czechs | 0.8 | 4.0 | 37.0 | 54.0 | 4.2 |
| Slovaks | 1.6 | 4.7 | 32.0 | 60.5 | 1.2 |
| Hungarians | 10.9 | 24.6 | 38.0 | 23.5 | 3.0 |
| 3. Unplanned purchases make me happy | | | | | |
| Poles | 18.8 | 49.5 | 17.4 | 8.3 | 6.0 |
| Czechs | 11.0 | 37.0 | 34.0 | 10.0 | 8.0 |
| Slovaks | 16.0 | 37.5 | 22.5 | 19.9 | 4.1 |
| Hungarians | 44.5 | 42.9 | 6.6 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| 4. If someone does not have money, it means that they are shiftless | | | | | |
| Poles | 1.8 | 12.0 | 35.5 | 44.3 | 6.4 |
| Czechs | 1.8 | 7.5 | 38.5 | 42.2 | 10.0 |
| Slovaks | 2.1 | 5.9 | 23.0 | 65.4 | 3.6 |
| Hungarians | 8.5 | 16.1 | 38.3 | 29.8 | 7.3 |

SOURCE: Team research, own calculation.

This otherness in the Hungarian students' attitude towards money has been confirmed by the analysis of the responses to the next statement: "You have to spend a lot of money to have respect and impress people". This statement indicates an instrumental use of money and consumption motivated by the need for prestige. The CBOS research showed that a majority of the researched Poles do not agree with this statement (FAŁECKA, 2013: 9). Psychological research has drawn attention to the fact that people with low self-esteem believe that money has the power to give strength, prestige and control over others, these in turn help such individuals raise their self-esteem (GAŚTOROWSKA, 2014; 200). The Hungarian students are the ones most commonly agreeing that one needs to

spend money in order to impress others. More than 1/3 of this national group opted for this approach while in the case of the other countries the percentage of its supporters was only less than 6% (the least approval was found amongst the Polish students – 4.3%). More than 90% of the Polish, Czech and Slovak students disagree with such a statement and only 61.5% of their Hungarian counterparts. Is it possibly the effect of living in a big city, in the capital? This seems to be the only identifiable factor unless the less tangible cultural specificity is at work here. Interestingly, the examined Polish students are also mostly the inhabitants of big cities, though not as large as Budapest.

The tendency is further confirmed by the results obtained from the assessments of the fourth statement: “If someone does not have money, it means that they are shiftless”. Almost 1/4 of the Hungarian students (24.6%) support this statement, while only 8.0% of the Slovaks, 10% of the Czechs and slightly more – 13.8% of the Poles share this conviction. The “definitely yes” answers were chosen by 8.5% of the Hungarians and by only 1.8% of the Poles and Czechs. The Hungarian students attach more importance to money and think that those who do not have it should blame themselves for it.

Additionally, the Hungarian students in the vast majority declare that: “Unplanned purchases make me happy” (“definitely yes” and “rather yes” answers – 87.4%). When it comes to the other nationalities, 68.3% of the Poles, 48.0% of the Czechs and 53.5% of the Slovaks think the same. For at least a half of the students, regardless of the nationality, shopping is a pleasure, but definitely more Hungarian students have this view. When we analyze only the “definitely yes” answers, it can be said that it is declared by 44.5% of the Hungarians, 11.0% of the Czechs, 16.0% of the Slovaks and 18.8% of the Poles. This statement concerns a specific behavior, a certain attitude towards spending money. It should be assumed that the researched students already have some work experience. It follows then that the Hungarian students most frequently got work experience, comparing to the other national samples. Accordingly, it is likely that their resources are large enough to allow them unplanned purchases.

Summing up this part of the analysis set to determine students’ attitudes towards money, we can state that a majority of students do not attach much importance to money. This particularly pertains to Polish, Slovak and Czech students. These are the students who do not judge other people based on their money spending. What is more, they do not feel bad (inferior) when they do not have the things their friends do. On the other hand, for a large number of students unplanned shopping is admittedly a pleasure. This is far from surprising as this attitude is common for the young generation (FAŁECKA, 2013: 9). Hungarian students represent a slightly different attitude comparing to the other national groups. They attach a much bigger importance to money, their evaluation of people is money-related, for instance depends on whether or not they have or spend money. Hungarians show a materialistic approach to life, adopt

an attitude wherein that lack of something others have can influence their own their self-esteem.

Do the students assessments of their household material conditions somehow affect their responses to the analyzed statements? We will only analyze the Hungarian students' answers here (as the most interesting ones). As regards the statements to the question presented in Table 7.4., there was identified no statistical dependence (T.1.: chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.303$; T.2.: chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.575$; T.3.: chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.502$; T.4.: chi-square test does not show any relevance: $p = 0.033$). On the other hand, the percentages results show that in T.1. as the declared material conditions worsen, the percentage of the people who definitely declare that: "I feel worse when I do not have what my friends had" increases. By contrast, in the second statement: "You have to spend a lot of money to have respect and impress people" the percentage results are as follows:

- We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.). Answer "definitely yes" – 16.7%.
- We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses. Answer "definitely yes" – 13.6%.
- We do OK, we need to save. Answer "definitely yes" – 11.7%.
- We live frugally, but we have enough to eat. Answer "definitely yes" – 9.9%.

The analysis of the answers given by the Hungarian students suggests that the self-perceived well-being of the students who come from families living in better material conditions, is definitely money-dependent. They are also the ones inclined to judge other people based on their possession or lack of money. Also other behaviors are determined by access to sufficient financial resources. The analysis of the responses to the third statement: "Unplanned purchases make me happy", says that those who have better material conditions more often agree with this statement. This is probably due to the fact that in order to shop, appropriate resources are needed. In conclusion, we can state that material conditions have influence on some of the attitudes towards money.

7.4 Spending – saving money

Sociological research shows that opinions on saving money to the greatest extent are determined by students' life situation. Caution in spending and saving money characterizes people who plan their financial future and control material situation. Psychological research has showed that higher income translates into greater satisfaction from one's own financial situation and a tendency to invest money, while lower income is accompanied by stronger emotions connected with spending money (WĄSOWICZ-KIRYŁO, 2013: 202). Less affluent people, those who cannot satisfy their current basic needs are less likely to save money than those who

Table 7.5. What is your position on the issue of spending/saving money? (%)

| National | Definitely yes | Rather Yes | Rather not | Definitely not | Hard to say |
|---|----------------|------------|------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Saving money does not make sense, it is better to spend on current needs | | | | | |
| Poles (N = 400) | 0.0 | 3.0 | 35.8 | 58.0 | 3.2 |
| Czechs (N = 349) | 1.6 | 5.7 | 35.8 | 55.5 | 1.4 |
| Slovaks (N = 387) | 2.8 | 11.6 | 43.4 | 40.6 | 1.6 |
| Hungarians (N = 368) | 4.3 | 11.4 | 39.1 | 42.7 | 2.5 |
| 2. I would rather save than spend on my cravings | | | | | |
| Poles | 22.5 | 41.8 | 24.5 | 4.3 | 6.9 |
| Czechs | 8.0 | 48.7 | 30.9 | 4.9 | 7.5 |
| Slovaks | 25.6 | 47.3 | 20.9 | 3.6 | 2.6 |
| Hungarians | 22.6 | 52.7 | 17.1 | 4.3 | 3.3 |
| 3. I often take a loan to buy something expensive, or I buy on installment | | | | | |
| Poles | 0.0 | 2.3 | 9.3 | 86.0 | 2.4 |
| Czechs | 0.0 | 1.7 | 20.9 | 74.5 | 2.9 |
| Slovaks | 0.5 | 1.6 | 8.8 | 85.5 | 3.6 |
| Hungarians | 3.3 | 3.8 | 17.4 | 72.8 | 2.7 |
| 4. If I want to have something, I buy and I do not think about whether I can afford it at that moment | | | | | |
| Poles | 2.0 | 7.8 | 29.3 | 58.0 | 2.9 |
| Czechs | 0.3 | 6.9 | 46.4 | 41.5 | 4.9 |
| Slovaks | 4.1 | 12.1 | 33.3 | 49.1 | 1.4 |
| Hungarians | 6.3 | 18.5 | 41.8 | 31.0 | 2.4 |
| 5. Usually I buy only what I had planned in advance | | | | | |
| Poles | 15.8 | 58.5 | 18.7 | 3.3 | 3.7 |
| Czechs | 6.0 | 56.4 | 27.5 | 4.4 | 5.7 |
| Slovaks | 17.8 | 57.1 | 19.1 | 3.6 | 2.4 |
| Hungarians | 17.7 | 45.7 | 25.3 | 7.9 | 3.4 |

SOURCE: Team research, own calculation.

are more wealthy (BADORA 2012; KOWALCZUK, 2014a; SWADŹBA, 2016). Also younger respondents, who have a longer life expectancy, more often see the point of saving comparing to older people. Likewise in the case of loans and mortgages – their profitability is mostly seen by younger respondents. That is why

we have asked the question about the tendency to spend and save money. Five statements were presented and each of them is a separate issue. The results of the Polish students and the students from the other V4 countries are presented in the table below.

When we analyze each question, it turns out that the students from the V4 countries are abstinent in spending money. The vast majority of them, as from 81.8% (Hungarians) to 93.5% (Poles) of the students do not agree with the first statement: „Saving money does not make sense, it is better to spend on current needs”. Only a few percent of the students have an opposite view. The Polish students most strongly oppose this statement in comparison to the students from the other V4 countries. Less decisive are the Hungarians (15.7%) and Slovaks (14.4%), who think saving money makes no sense. Our conclusions drawn from previous answers that Hungarians more willingly spend money, can thus be confirmed.

Are students always so consistent in their choices? The aim of the second statement was to checking that: “I would rather save than spend on my cravings”. Sociological research had already proved that young people are less likely to save (FAŁĘCKA, 2013: 6). Our research results showed that a vast majority of the students agree with this statement. When we add both, “definitely yes” and “rather not” answers, we get the following percentages: Poles – 64.8%, Czechs – 56.7%, Slovaks – 73.9%, Hungarians – 75.3%). However, almost 30% of the Polish students do not agree with this statement. A similar pattern was found among the answers of the students from the other countries, most prominently in the Czechs’ answers (35.9%), followed by the Slovaks (24.5%), and then the Hungarians with the lowest percentage (21.4%). This can be explained by the fact that theoretically students are supporters of saving, but when it comes to denying themselves small pleasures and saving at their own cost, this is no longer that obvious for some of them. Perhaps, this is due to the fact that students usually do not have too much money and thus do not really have any money to save, but they are convinced such an approach is good. Maybe it is a more common tendency, sociological research had showed that the majority of the Poles declare that their families have no savings (KOWALCZUK, 2014).

Let’s analyze what the structural features of the generation of the young Poles, who prefer to spend money on cravings rather than save, are. This attitude is more often observed among women (32.7%) than men (22.6%). There is a statistical correlation between this declaration and gender ($p = 0.044$, chi-square relevant, Cramer’s $V = 0.156$). Those are also mostly students from large (10.3% “definitely yes” answers) rather than from small cities (1.1% from cities up to 20000 inhabitants). There is a lack of variety when it comes to assessing household material conditions, however such an attitude towards saving/spending was mostly expressed by those who had declared worse household material conditions. Do students from families with a low status represent a different

lifestyle as they spend on their cravings and not think about the future and save money? Or maybe they do not have enough money to save from? Also the results of other sociological research had emphasized that less affluent people, who have no money to save from what is left, spend chiefly on current needs (BADORA, 2012; OMYŁA-RUDZKA, 2012).

A further analysis of this statement: "I often take a loan to buy something expensive, or I buy on installment" shows that not many students take loans to buy something more expensive. The already mentioned prior sociological research had highlighted that young people see the profitability in taking loans or mortgages. They are at the stage of earning extra money and see the point in it (BADORA, 2012). Only a small percentage of the Polish, Czech and Slovak students and a slightly higher, i.e. more than 7%, of the Hungarian students agree with this statement. This is probably the result of small accessibility of loans to students with unstable incomes.

The next statement is about the impulsiveness of shopping: "If I want to have something, I buy and I do not think about whether I can afford it at that moment". The vast majority of the students reject such a view and do reasonable shopping. Acting reasonably particularly concerns the Polish and Czech students. To the greatest extent impulsive shopping attitudes are represented by the Slovak students (more than 16%) and even more by the Hungarian students (almost 25%). The Hungarian students seem to be the most unreflective in their attitudes towards spending money. Who are the students who admittedly shop impulsively? In Poland, such shopping practices are acknowledged by the students from families with worse household material conditions. On the other hand, in Poland as well as in Hungary we have an overrepresentation of the students from families with the highest material status. The results are summarized below:

- We have enough money for everything (e.g. expensive trips abroad, frequent changes of new cars, etc.): Answer "definitely yes" and "rather yes" – (Poles – 14.6%, Hungarians – 41.5%).
- We do well, but cannot afford extra expenses. Answer "definitely yes" "rather yes" – (Poles – 9.1%, Hungarians 32.6%).
- We do ok, we need to save. Answer "definitely yes" and "rather yes" – (Poles – 8.2%, Hungarians – 19.1%).
- We live frugally, but we have enough to eat. Answer "definitely yes" and "rather yes" – (Poles – 10.1%, Hungarians 14.2%).

People who come from families with high material status can afford impulsive shopping, while students from families with not so high a material status are unlikely to have an excess of money and impulsive shopping is not good for their household.

The fifth statement that says: "Usually I buy only what I have planned in advance" is the opposite of the previous one and concerns planning shopping.

Most of the students, including the Poles, mostly buy what they have planned. The Hungarian (30.3%) and Czech students (31.5%) more often admit that they do not do unplanned shopping comparing to the Poles (22.1%) and Slovaks (22.7%). More Hungarian students represent this attitude than do the students from any other national group (7.9% of “definitely not” answers). Among the Polish students, slightly more often this attitude is represented by those who do very well (34.6%) than those who live frugally (24.5%) and more often by women (24.1%) than men (19.4%).

Summing up the results of the responses to this question, the following general conclusions can be drawn. Most of the examined students treat saving as a value and declare a positive attitude towards it. Polish students are frugal in spending money. Saving is a positive value for them, although it is not always easy in practice. Still, no big and significant differences in this matter were found among the students from the other V4 countries, they also have a positive attitude towards saving money.

7.5 Summary

Money plays a big role in today's world and has a lot of functions. For many people money is a psychological and social value. The attitudes individual represent towards money depend on socio-demographic features. One of these features is age. The young generation of the V4 countries has been brought up in market economy conditions and had an opportunity to get to know the real value of money. Some of the students, through taking up work during the academic year or during the holidays, also have a chance to get to know the value of earned money and possibilities to spend them.

1. The results of our research show that students generally have a cautious attitude towards money without attaching too much value to it, but still appreciate money as necessary in life. They think that money does not bring happiness and that there are more important values. For most students from the V4 countries money is not necessary to have a pleasant leisure time, although some of them appreciate it in this regard. The researched young people are supporters of saving, although they do like to spend on their cravings. Therefore, after the analysis of the general results, the hypothesis presented at the beginning of the chapter can, to a large extent, be positively verified: „We assume that young people have an ambivalent attitude to money. On the one hand, they think there are more important things than wealth, but on the other, they attach considerable importance to money; they need it to have a pleasant leisure time. They acknowledge, however, that there is a purpose in saving.”

Only the part about money as precondition for having a pleasant leisure time was not entirely confirmed.

The conclusions mentioned above concern the overall results. There are some differences between the students from different countries in terms of their attitudes towards money and spending/saving though. The Hungarians have turned out to be the “odd” ones in the V4 group in their views and behaviors, although some particularities and dominant features have also been observed in the other national groups. It is difficult to say whether these are national features or if they also stem from some other socio-demographic features we could clearly identify. On the basis of the analyses presented in this chapter we can distinguish several characteristic types of attitudes:

- **Delighted** – characterizing people for whom money is a very important value in life. Some of them think that they will achieve happiness through money. Money is important for them also as a symbol of success, prestige and success in life. Another confirmation of these in their opinion is ostentatious spending. These people need to have money in order to have a pleasant leisure time. Consumption is also important for them and it is practiced through shopping, usually without reflection. The research has proved that in each of the national groups we can find such attitudes, but most often they are represented by the Hungarians and then the Czechs.
- **Valuable** – typical of people for whom money is an important value but to a moderate extent. They appreciate that thanks to money they can use many goods, and services, and have a comfortable life. Young people experience the value of money and thanks to that they live in relative prosperity. Still, they think that one should value other people not only through/because of money. Such people appreciate that when they have money, they can have a pleasant leisure time. They value saving money for the future and planned spending. Sometimes they like to do unplanned shopping for the sheer pleasure of it. This attitude is most often represented by the Czechs, but also by some of the Poles and Slovaks.
- **Reasonable** – people for whom money is a moderate value. They think that other values are also important in life and that money does not bring happiness. Within this line of thinking, money is not a factor when evaluating other people. These individuals do not feel bad or inferior when they do not have the things their friends do, and also money is not something they absolutely need in order to have a pleasant leisure time. They manage their money reasonably. They think saving money makes sense. They do not support unplanned shopping, although sometimes they allow themselves to make some exception from the rule. This type of attitudes is represented most often by the Poles, but also by the Slovaks. These are the students who come from slightly poorer environments and their life situation forces them to manage money reasonably.
- **Skeptical** – the approach of those students who treat money as a value to a negligible extent, as they think there are other values in life. Money does not

determine the value of people and their judgement, but allows one to afford and do more in life. Such individuals do not feel bad just because other people have money. This is due to the fact that their families are in a less favourable material situation and this way of thinking allows them to keep their dignity. They plan their expenses because it is a necessity, but they sometimes succumb to their whims. They are supporters of saving money but they realize that free funds are needed for that. This type of attitudes can be found in every national group, but most often among the Slovak students, then the Polish students and a small percentage among the Czechs.

The research shows that attitudes towards money depend on the young people's material situation. The youth from big cities and wealthy families to a large extent have a materialistic attitude and they appreciate money more as well as treat it as an important factor when evaluating other people. Thanks to money they have experienced comfortable life, thus money is an important value for them and they favour spending it (on spending free time, unplanned shopping, succumbing to whims). The youth who come from poorer environments also appreciate the value of money but they stand for a desired rather than an actually experienced value they could not do without. If we were to generalize we could say that the attitudes towards money presented above are found in every national group. They result not only from national specificities, but also from socio-demographic features of the researched students. Some attitudes towards money are represented chiefly by richer youth from big cities and different by youth from poorer, smaller and rural environment.